

To all,

It is with heartfelt regret the Essex County Sheriff's Department must announce that its Youth Academy for the summer of 2011 has been cancelled. The postponement is a result of the difficult financial environment that all state agencies have been dealing with for the past three years.

For the last 11 years, the Essex County Sheriff's Department's Youth Academy has provided youngsters between the ages of 8 and 15 with an opportunity to learn about teamwork, build leadership skills and instilled a sense of personal responsibility for their actions. The academy was free and gave participants the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities, including navigating the ropes course at Project Adventure in Beverly, studying about the dangers of drug abuse, and learning how to prevent bullying in their schools.

"The Youth Academy is an important program for many of the residents and children who live in the region our department serves," Essex County Sheriff Frank G. Cousins, Jr. said. "I am heartbroken that it must be cancelled this summer due to budget constraints. I intend to try my hardest to make sure the program returns in 2012."